

Academic Promotions Policy

3.1	Vice-Chancellor and President	29 April 2024	29 April 2024	February 2027
Policy Statement				
		This policy details how academic staff who can demonstrate sustained excellence in contributing to UNSW through research, education, collegiality, engagement and/or leadership may be promoted.		
		All academic staff eligible to apply for promotion.		

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The academic promotions system aims to recognise and reward sustained achievements and contributions to the UNSW Strategy, rather than just to recognise the talent of individual staff. Appointments made on the basis of

2. Principles

2.1. The *Academic Promotions*

<https://unsw.sharepoint.com/sites/unsw-capability-development/SitePages/Academic-Promotion.aspx>.

- 3.3. Applicants should refer to the section on Approvals and Effective Dates of Promotion in the *Academic Promotions Procedure* for details regarding the effective dates of promotion. Applicants have a responsibility to be aware of the eligibility criteria before submitting an application.
- 3.4. For a promotion committee to be able to assess an applicant's case for sustained performance the applicant would need to have served at least two years at their current level since the effective date of their last promotion or appointment at UNSW. This means in effect that an applicant will be in their third year of their current level before being eligible to submit an application for promotion to the next level.
- 3.5. An exemption to this two year rule may under special circumstances be granted by the University's Out of Rounds Promotion Committee. The dean of the relevant faculty will be required to submit a case to the Out of Rounds Promotion Committee as to why an exemption should be granted. A case for an exemption should be submitted to the University's Out of Rounds Committee before the official submission date for applications (refer to the Out of Rounds Policy on the [HR Hub](#)).
- 3.6. Unsuccessful applicants may not re-apply in the year following an unsuccessful application but may re-apply in the subsequent year.
- 3.7. Each application for promotion is considered on its own merits

For each of these categories, performance at a particular level will be assessed by consideration of:

- (a) comparison of the performance of the applicant with that expected of a member of the academic staff in like disciplines in universities matching the strategic aspiration of UNSW; and
- (b) overall performance sustained over a number of years and recent trajectory.

In line with UNSW's commitment to providing opportunities for all staff irrespective of their personal circumstances and recognising that a pattern of full-time work and uninterrupted linear careers does not match the profile of many staff, the principle of performance relative to opportunity will be taken into consideration in the promotion procedure. Such an approach acknowledges what has been achieved by an applicant, given the opportunities that have been available to them. It is important to note that candidates are assessed individually and not on a head-to-head comparative basis with other individuals.

In making their assessment, promotion committees will take into account any information provided on the circumstances related to a staff member's achievements. Nevertheless, it is also acknowledged that the promotion committee has a responsibility to ensure that globally relevant academic

- 5.2. In many instances, applicants will have made some contribution under each of the three pillars of academic performance. However, applicants may also be promoted on the basis of an impressive contribution in any two of the three pillars of academic performance.
- 5.3. In terms of research performance there is an expectation that the applicant's research performance in their discipline will be consistent with that expected amongst the top universities in Australia.
- 5.4. In terms of contributions to Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership the applicant must demonstrate how their contributions have added value to the institution, to the discipline, sector or community in the context of UNSW's Strategy.
- 5.5. Applicants for promotion at all levels should highlight any leadership contributions they have made. Particularly for the higher levels of promotion (Level D and Level E), there is a requirement for increasing external recognition and demonstrated leadership in the discipline extending beyond UNSW.
- 5.6. In assessing a case for promotion, promotion committees will focus first on the achievements since the applicant's last promotion or current appointment at UNSW. Total career performance (including at other institutions) is also taken into account.
- 5.7. Where appropriate, present quantifiable evidence to support their claims for promotion, for example, a graphical representation of research productivity or some measure of research quality over time.
- 5.8. Evidence should be provided to substantiate claims of the quality and impact of the contributions made.
- 5.9. In all three areas, applicants are encouraged to focus on two or three characteristic examples that best illustrate what they have achieved and its impact rather than catalogue every possible example.
- 5.10. Contributions to Honours supervision, the supervision of Masters coursework student projects, guest lectures, and contributions to tutorials or practical classes for coursework students should be listed as teaching achievements. But the supervision of Higher Degree Research (HDR) students and Post-doctoral trainee supervision (which is a key determinant of the quality of 'research focussed' and 'research and teaching' staff achievements but not 'education focussed' staff) should be listed among the research achievements.
- 5.11. Applicants should appropriately cross-reference linkages in the application rather than repeat evidence.
- 5.12. Applicants should refer to Schedule 3 of the [UNSW \(Academic Staff\) Enterprise Agreement \(2023\)](#) which specifies position classification standards.

The Academic Expectations Framework may also be helpful for an understanding of performance expectations for each level of promotion.

6. Principles of assessment against each of the pillars of academic performance

- 6.1. The University acknowledges that academic staff make important and valuable contributions across the three key pillars of academic performance, namely Research, Education and Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership.
- 6.2. The process of promotion is fundamentally based upon peer review of performance. The peers include the Head of School, the Referees, the Faculty Promotion Committee and, for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor, the University Promotion Committee.
- 6.3. The process is designed to allow a holistic judgement as to whether the portfolio of performance justifies promotion within UNSW. Performance with respect to the three pillars of Education, Research, Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership will be considered against expectations of both the academic level and the balance of the individual's responsibilities.
- 6.4. The University recognises that there are academic staff members who specialise in one of these academic performance pillars and make excellent contributions in this specific area along with other valuable contributions in some of the other key areas while there are also other academic staff members who make superior contributions across all three key areas of academic performance.
- 6.5. The University's academic promotions policy provides a pathway for all academic staff to be able to apply for promotion with consideration to the contributions that they have made in the relevant pillars within the context of their current academic position.
- 6.6. In each of the 3 areas for assessment (Education, Research, Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership), performance will be assessed as "acceptable", "superior" or "excellent".

An applicant can be recommended for promotion to a higher academic level by meeting eligibility, University values and behaviours via any of the pathways outlined below;

Demonstration of a sustained Excellent level of performance in any one of the academic pillars along with a sustained Superior level of performance in either of the other two academic pillars

Demonstration of a sustained Excellent level of performance in any one of the academic pillars along with a sustained Acceptable level of performance in the other two academic pillars

Demonstration of a sustained Superior level of performance across all three pillars of academic performance.

Accountabilities	
Responsible Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality
Contact Officer	Manager, Academic Promotions
Supporting Information	
Legislative Compliance	This Policy supports the University's compliance with the following legislation: Nil
Supporting Documents	Academic Promotions Procedure Promotion Forms Academic Promotion Toolkit Academic Performance Expectations Application of achievement relative to opportunity and performance evidence in academic promotions.
Related Documents	Code of Conduct

